related to the *Ilices* or Hollys, differing chiefly in the number of its parts. Its character is formed by *a six cleft calyx, a monopetalous subrotate six cleft corolla, and a six seeded berry.* The Prinos verticillatus has *its leaves deciduous, oval, serrate, acuminate, slightly pubescent beneath; flowers axillary, aggregate.*

These shrubs have usually been referred to *Hexandria Monogynia.* The present species and some others having different flowers on separate plants, Michaux was induced to place them in Dicœcia. The natural orders to which they are assigned are *Dumosæ* of Linn. and *Rhamni* of Juss.

The Black Alder, for so the shrub is usually called, is found in swamps and about the edges of streams and ponds from Canada to the Southern states. It is irregular in its growth, but most commonly forms bunches six or eight feet in height. The leaves are alternate or scattered, on short petioles, oval, acute at base, sharply serrate, acuminate, with some hairiness, particularly on the veins underneath. The flowers are small, white, growing in little tufts or imperfect umbels, which are nearly sessile in the axils of the leaves. Calyx small, six cleft, persistent. Corolla monopetalous, spreading, without a tube,

the border divided into six obtuse segments. The stamens are erect, with oblong anthers. In the barren flowers they are equal in length to the corolla, in the fertile ones, shorter. The germ, in the fertile flowers, is large, green, roundish, with a short neck or style, terminating in an obtuse stigma. These are followed by irregular bunches of bright scarlet berries, which are roundish, supported by the persistent calyx, and crowned with the stigma, six celled, containing six long seeds, which are convex outwardly and sharp edged within. These berries are bitter and unpleasant to the taste, with a little sweetness and some acrimony.

The bark of the Black alder is moderately bitter, but inferior in this respect to many of our shrubs and trees. It discovers very little astringency either to the taste, or to chemical tests. A decoction which I made of the dried bark underwent no alteration on the addition of dissolved gelatin, and only changed to a dark green with the sulphate of iron. Alcohol produced hardly any change. The tincture, in alcohol, was found moderately bitter, and was not altered by water.

The Black alder has had a considerable reputation as a tonic medicine, perhaps more than it

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